the fundamental powers of self-government.''

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Monday, February 9, 1998, the Federal debt stood at $5,468,966,737,716.36 (Five trillion, four hundred sixty-eight billion, nine hundred sixty-six million, seven hundred thirty-seven thousand, seven hundred sixteen dollars and thirty-six cents).

Five years ago, February 9, 1993, the Federal debt stood at $4,173,624,000,000 (Four trillion, one hundred seventy-three billion, six hundred twenty-four million).

Ten years ago, February 9, 1988, the Federal debt stood at $2,545,424,000,000 (Two trillion, five hundred forty-five billion, four hundred twenty-four million).

Fifteen years ago, February 9, 1983, the Federal debt stood at $1,192,294,000,000 (One trillion, one hundred ninety-two billion, two hundred ninety-four million).

Twenty-five years ago, February 9, 1973, the Federal debt stood at $448,265,000,000 (Four hundred forty-eight billion, two hundred sixty-five million) which reflects a debt increase of more than $5 trillion—$5,020,701,737,716.36 (Five trillion, twenty billion, seven hundred one million, seven hundred thirty-seven thousand, seven hundred sixteen dollars and thirty-six cents) during the past 25 years.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR JOHN WARNER ON THE NATO EXPANSION AMENDMENT

Mr. THURMOND. Mr. President, Senators WARNER and LEVIN are absent from the Senate this week so that they can accompany Secretary of Defense Cohen on his trip to the Persian Gulf. They are representing the Armed Services Committee on this important trip, and will report their findings to the Committee and to the Senate leadership.

During his absence, Senator WARNER has requested that I insert the following statement in the RECORD on his behalf. I am happy to do this for my colleague. I ask unanimous consent that Senator WARNER's statement be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

STATEMENT OF SENATOR WARNER—NATO EXPANSION AMENDMENT

This past weekend I was privileged to attend the annual Wehrkunde Conference in Munich, Germany. A main topic of discussion at this NATO security conference was the issue of NATO expansion. I have consistently expressed my sincere concerns with this policy.

NATO has been the most valuable and successful military alliance in the history of this Nation. It has worked far beyond the expectations of its founders—keeping peace in Europe for 50 years, and securing victory in the cold war. President Truman cited NATO and the Marshall Plan as the greatest achievements of his presidency. I am concerned that we not do anything to undermine the effectiveness of this great alliance.

Recently, the Senate Armed Services Committee received testimony from former Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger and former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger on the issue of NATO expansion. Although both said that the Senate should provide its advice and consent for the first round of expansion, they expressed a number of concerns. Secretary Schlesinger called this first round of NATO expansion ''a bad idea whose time has come.'' And Secretary Kissinger warned that we are in danger of transforming NATO into a ''U.N.-type instrument'' if expansion is not handled properly.

It seems clear that this first round of expansion will go forward as planned. My concern is that we build in a mechanism to guard against precipitous, future expansion rounds.

During the Wehrkunde Conference, I had the opportunity to discuss an idea I have been contemplating to establish a moratorium—of 3 to 5 years—on new members being invited to join the NATO alliance, following the likely addition of Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic in 1999. In my view, such a moratorium is crucial to allow NATO to begin the process of integrating the three new nations, and more fully assess the impact of this integration before proceeding with further expansion rounds.

The purpose of this statement today is to promptly inform my colleagues of my discussions in Germany and my intent, upon returning from the trip with Secretary Cohen, to submit to the Senate for consideration an amendment which will establish a 3-year moratorium on future NATO expansions. This amendment will be drafted as a condition to the resolution of ratification, and will effectively prevent the United States from agreeing to any further expansion of the NATO alliance for a period of three years.

I will make a full set of remarks on this amendment and seek co-sponsors following my return. I look forward to engaging in an extended debate on this issue—and other aspects of NATO expansion—in the weeks to come.

I thank Senator THURMOND for assisting me in making this statement a part of the RECORD during my absence on official business as part of Secretary Cohen's delegation to the Persian Gulf and Russia.

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Williams, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the Committee on Armed Services.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

1998 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COUNCIL OF ECONOMIC ADVISERS—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT—PM 96

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Joint Economic Committee.

To the Congress of the United States:

For the last 5 years this Administration has worked to strengthen our Nation for the 21st century, expanding opportunity for all Americans, demanding responsibility from all Americans, and bringing us together as a community of all Americans. Building a strong economy is the cornerstone of our efforts to meet these challenges.

When I first took office in 1993, the Federal budget deficit was out of control, unemployment was unacceptably high, and wages were stagnant. To reverse this course, we took a new approach, putting in place a bold economic strategy designed to bring down the deficit and give America's workers the tools and training they need to help them thrive in our changing economy.

Our strategy has succeeded: the economy has created more than 14 million new jobs, unemployment is at its lowest level in 24 years, and core inflation is at its lowest level in 30 years. Economic growth in 1997 was the strongest in almost a decade, and the benefits of that growth are being shared by all Americans: poverty is dropping and median family income has gone up nearly $2,200 since 1993. We also saw the biggest drop in welfare rolls in history. Many challenges remain, but Americans are enjoying the fruits of an economy that is steady and strong.

THE ADMINISTRATION'S ECONOMIC STRATEGY

From the beginning, this Administration's economic strategy has had three crucial elements: reducing the deficit, investing in people, and opening markets abroad.

Deficit reduction. In 1993 this Administration's deficit reduction plan set the Nation on a course of fiscal responsibility, while making critical investments in the skills and well-being of our people. When I took office, the deficit was $290 billion and projected to go much higher. This year the deficit will fall to just $10 billion and possibly lower still. That is a reduction of more than 95 percent, leaving the deficit today smaller in relation to the size of the economy than it has been since 1969.

And this year I have proposed a budget that will eliminate the deficit entirely, achieving the first balanced budget in 30 years.

Beyond that, it is projected that the budget will show a sizable surplus in the years to come. I propose that we reserve 100 percent of the surplus until we have taken the necessary measures to strengthen the Social Security system for the 21st century. I am committed to addressing Social Security first, to ensure that all Americans are confident that it will be there when they need it.

Investing in our people. In the new economy, the most precious resource this Nation has is the skills and ingenuity of working Americans. Investing in the education and health of our people will help all Americans reap the rewards of a growing, changing economy. Those who are better educated, with the flexibility and the skills they need to move from one job to another and seize new opportunities, will succeed in the new economy; those who do not will fall behind.

That is why the historic balanced budget agreement I signed into law in 1997 included the largest increase in aid to education in 30 years, and the biggest increase to help people go to college since the G.I. Bill was passed 50 years ago. The agreement provided funds to ensure that we stay on track to help 1 million disadvantaged children prepare for success in school. It provided funding for the America Reads Challenge, with the goal of mobilizing a million volunteers to promote literacy, and it made new investments in our schools themselves, to help connect every classroom and library in this country to the Internet by the year 2000.

The balanced budget agreement created the HOPE scholarship program, to make completion of the 13th and 14th years of formal education as widespread as a high school diploma is today. It offered other tuition tax credits for college and skills training. It created a new Individual Retirement Account that allows tax-free withdrawals to pay for education. It provided the biggest increase in Pell grants in two decades. Finally, it provided more funds so that aid to dislocated workers is more than double what it was in 1993, to help these workers get the skills they need to remain productive in a changing economy.

But we must do more to guarantee all Americans the quality education they need to succeed. That is why I have proposed a new initiative to improve the quality of education in our public schools—through high national standards and national tests, more charter schools to stimulate competition, greater accountability, higher quality teaching, smaller class sizes, and more classrooms.

To strengthen our Nation we must also strengthen our families. The Family and Medical Leave Act, which I signed into law in 1993, ensures that millions of people no longer have to choose between being good parents and being good workers. The Health Care Portability and Accountability Act, enacted in 1996, ensures that workers can keep their health insurance if they change jobs or suffer a family emergency. We have also increased the minimum wage, expanded the earned income tax credit, and provided for a new $500-per-child tax credit for working families. To continue making progress toward strengthening families, the balanced budget agreement allocated $24 billion to provide health insurance to up to 5 million uninsured children—the largest Federal investment in children's health care since Medicaid was created in 1965.

Opening markets and expanding exports. To create more good jobs and increase wages, we must open markets abroad and expand U.S. exports. Trade has been key to the strength of this economic expansion—about a third of our economic growth in recent years has come from selling American goods and services overseas. The Information Technology Agreement signed in 1997 lowers tariff and other barriers to 90 percent of world trade in information technology services.

To continue opening new markets, creating new jobs, and increasing our prosperity, it is critically important to renew fast-track negotiating authority. This authority, which every President of either party has had for the last 20 years, enables the President to negotiate trade agreements and submit them to the Congress for an up-or-down vote, without modification. Renewing this traditional trade authority is essential to American's ability to shape the global economy of the 21st century.

SEIZING THE BENEFITS OF A GROWING, CHANGING ECONOMY

As we approach the 21st century the American economy is sound and strong, but challenges remain. We know that information and technology and global commerce are rapidly transforming the economy, offering new opportunities but also posing new challenges. Our goal must be to ensure that all Americans are equipped with the skills to succeed in this growing, changing economy.

Our economic strategy—balancing the budget, investing in our people, opening markets—has set this Nation on the right course to meet this goal. This strategy will support and contribute to America's strength in the new economic era, removing barriers to our economy's potential and providing our people with the skills, the flexibility, and the security to succeed. We must continue to maintain the fiscal discipline that is balancing the budget, to invest in our people and their skills, and to lead the world to greater prosperity in the 21st century.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *February 10, 1998.*

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following executive reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. CHAFEE, from the Committee on Environment and Public Works:

Sallyanne Harper, of Virginia, to be Chief Financial Officer, Environmental Protection Agency.

Donald J. Barry, of Wisconsin, to be Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife.

(The above nominations were reported with the recommendation that they be confirmed, subject to the nominees' commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.)

By Mr. ROTH, from the Committee on Finance:

Michael B. Thornton, of Virginia, to be a Judge of the United States Tax Court for a term of fifteen years after he takes office.

Donald C. Lubick, of Maryland, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury.

L. Paige Marvel, of Maryland, to be a Judge of the United States Tax Court for a term of fifteen years after she takes office.

Richard W. Fisher, of Texas, to be Deputy United States Trade Representative, with the rank of Ambassador.

(The above nominations were reported with the recommendation that they be confirmed, subject to the nominees' commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second time by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. BREAUX:

S. 1620. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on certain textile machinery; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. GRAMS:

S. 1621. A bill to provide that certain Federal property shall be made available to States for State use before being made available to other entities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. BROWNBACK (for himself and Mr. GRASSLEY):

S. Con. Res. 73. A concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that the European Union is unfairly restricting the importation of United States agriculture products and the elimination of such restrictions should be a top priority in trade negotiations with the European Union; to the Committee on Finance.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. BREAUX:

S. 1620. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on certain textile machinery; to the Committee on Finance.